

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT and INNOVATION DIVISION (EAID)

Functional Statement

ORGANIZATION HEAD: *Division Director*

REPORTS TO: *Regional Administrator*

FUNCTIONS:

IMMEDIATE OFFICE OF THE DIVISION DIRECTOR. The Environmental Assessment and Innovation Division (EAID), under the supervision of the Director and Deputy Director, is responsible for developing, consolidating, assessing, and disseminating environmental information and statistics; advocating and promoting good science in the Region; developing and implementing strategies for ecosystem and human health protection efforts; and developing innovative approaches to environmental protection. EAID administers programs authorized by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); Sections 403 (c) and 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA); the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act; the Ocean Dumping Ban Act of 1988; and the Rivers and Harbors Act. The division also provides laboratory analytical services and quality assurance in support of program activities and offers specific technical advice and assistance to state and local agencies concerning methodologies and quality control, and laboratory analyses to assure the success of field investigations. In addition to Philadelphia, EAID has field offices in Fort Meade, MD and Wheeling, WV.

EAID consists of the Immediate Office of the Division Director and five offices: the Office of Environmental Information and Analysis, the Office of Analytical Services and Quality Assurance, the Office of Environmental Programs, the Office of Environmental Innovation, and the Office of Monitoring and Assessment. In addition to providing overall planning, budgeting, accountability, and communications services for the division, the Immediate Office staff provides liaison with other Regional programs, including negotiating Memoranda of Agreement, when appropriate, and serves as the central location for the following functions:

a: *Regional Science Liaison.* Acts as liaison to the Office of Research and Development (ORD) for the Region by providing technical and programmatic assistance in developing research and applied research goals and objectives. Co-chairs the Regional Science Council and represents the Region on the national Science Council.

b: *Regional Quality Assurance Manager (RQAM).* The RQAM manages the Regional Quality System including developing, maintaining, and implementing the Regional Quality Management Plan. The Regional Quality Council (RQC), which consists of Quality Assurance Contacts from each of the Program Division and Offices in the Region, assists the RQAM in carrying out these functions and is responsible for managing their respective organizations' Quality Assurance (QA) programs. The RQAM directs the efforts of the RQC, reviews and approves divisional and state Quality Management Plans, conducts management assessments, and provides technical

expertise and training in quality assurance. The RQAM is the Regional liaison to Headquarters Office of Environmental Information Quality Staff and represents the Region in QA related matters.

c: *Regional Quality Assurance Officer (RQAO)*. The RQAO supports the Regional Discharge Monitoring Report Quality Assurance Program, including interfacing with EPA Headquarters and states to conduct the annual National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) performance evaluation study, and provides criteria for selecting inspection targets. The RQAO is also EAID=s Quality Assurance contact on the RQC, and is responsible for the development, implementation and management of EAID=s Quality Management Plan and associated Quality Assurance Program. Evaluates state quality assurance plans submitted for Regional water monitoring projects.

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS. The Office of Environmental Information and Analysis (OEIA), under the supervision of the Associate Division Director, is responsible for characterizing the Region's environmental conditions and developing strategies to address the environmental problems identified in the characterizations. Through assessments of the environmental health of the Region, the Office fulfills a wide range of data needs for a variety of customers including Regional programs, state agencies, local governments, and the general public. The Office=s major responsibilities are to assess, characterize, and report on the health of the public and ecosystems; and to develop protection strategies based on the characterizations.

The Office is the lead for environmental planning in the Region. It works in conjunction with Regional programs to develop strategies for dealing with cross-cutting and emerging environmental issues. The strategies and associated action plans target Region III=s environmental protection efforts, develops cost estimates of different strategies, and conducts cost/benefit analyses of the strategies. The Office leads the Region=s efforts to develop performance measures that use environmental outcomes to measure progress toward achieving environmental goals. It develops environmental indicators to assist in the characterization of the health of the environment; identify current and future ecological, human health and quality of life issues; evaluate progress in attaining environmental goals; and estimate and compare the relative impacts of environmental issues addressed by Regional activities. In addition to indicators, other sources of environmental information are identified to analyze and evaluate potential uses of environmental information by the public, other external groups, and the regulated community; and to develop comprehensive plans and strategies for using state-of-the-art technology to meet the demand for this information.

Geospatial Analysis. The Geospatial Analysis function consists of EPA staff and contractors. Their joint mission is to develop geospatial displays of environmental information to support all regional staff and programs. This includes operational and technical support for hardware and software used by program staff as well as developing maps and other graphic displays and arrays for the Regional user community. The Office provides technical assistance for the development of cross-media and/or data integration projects to Regional programs and to other federal, state and local users. It provides support to convert data to digital formats. The Office operates the

Region's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and maintains the Regional repository of GIS data.

OFFICE OF ANALYTICAL SERVICES AND QUALITY ASSURANCE. The Office of Analytical Services and Quality Assurance (OASQA), under the supervision of the Associate Division Director, provides and assures the most appropriate quality of scientific information for environmental decision making in Region III. It also attains, maintains, and assures appropriate lab accreditation. OASQA is responsible for laboratory analytical services, site/project level data quality assurance, data management and integration, and biological sampling and analysis. OASQA provides both routine and non-routine sampling and analysis to a variety of customers, including the media programs, Office of Enforcement, Compliance and Environmental Justice, and the Regional Administrator. OASQA plays a major role in quality assurance of all Regional data collection and analysis. It is the Regional resource for biological support and technical assistance. The Associate Division Director plans, coordinates, directs and organizes the work and functions of OASQA. The Immediate Office includes the Quality Assurance Officer, who is responsible for the design and management of the Office's Quality System; and the Technical Director, who monitors the laboratory technical operations and conformance to OASQA's Quality System. The work of the OASQA is organized into two branches.

a: Laboratory Branch. The Laboratory Branch, under the supervision of the Branch Chief, has primary responsibility for all analytical, quality control and other tasks related to analyzing a variety of environmental samples for chemical and microbiological contaminants. The Branch also conducts inspections of other laboratories; certifies state laboratories for Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) chemistry and microbiological methods; oversees state SDWA chemistry and microbiological laboratory certification programs; and provides technical assistance and training to state agencies regarding laboratory practices, techniques, and management. It provides technical assistance and support to Regional program personnel regarding methods, detection limits, data results and interpretation, sampling and analysis requirements, etc. It also supports regional criminal investigations and other enforcement actions with sample analysis and interpretation of results and expert witness testimony.

b: Technical Services Branch. The Technical Services Branch, under the supervision of the Branch Chief, manages the acquisition and oversight of laboratory analytical services for Regional program offices. The Branch conducts on-site inspections, monitors performance, recommends corrective actions, and provides guidance, direction and technical assistance to Contract Lab Program labs in Region III. It acts as the Regional Sample Control Center to coordinate analytical support for all Regional programs. It delivers analytical services through the development of non-Contract Laboratory Program special analytical services specifications and requirements, procurement and management of analytical services agreements and contracts, coordination of the procurement for analytical services, problem resolution, monitoring of non-Contract Laboratory Program laboratory performance, and data acceptance/rejection. It manages the contracts for computer, administrative and library support.

The Branch is also responsible for Quality Assurance: it focuses on integrating the planning, assessment and improvement efforts associated with program implementation to meet users' requirements for production of environmental data. It provides technical support and assistance

during project planning; reviews Quality Assurance related documents (work plans, Field Sampling Plans, Lab plans, Standard Operating Procedures); recommends and evaluates analytical options, number and type of samples to be analyzed and costs associated with the proposed analyses; reviews and assesses environmental data; and provides other regional program and state support, including technical assistance, lab audits and inspections, and training. It maintains, operates and upgrades the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), and provides oversight to on-site contractors as Regional Project Officer for the Environmental Services Assistance Team (ESAT) contract.

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS. The Office of Environmental Programs (OEP), under the supervision of the Associate Division Director, is responsible for implementing the Wetlands Program under Section 404 of the CWA, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Program. OEP implements program requirements to fulfill regulatory responsibilities and to provide opportunities, tools and assistance to apply in the solution of environmental problems and in particular, watershed or other ecosystem or community based protection projects. OEP integrates regulatory responsibilities and activities in innovative ways to maximize environmental benefits.

a. Wetlands Team. The Wetlands Team, under the direction of the team leader, implements the CWA §404 program in the Region. It evaluates public and private construction projects for impacts to waters of the United States, including wetlands; and assists states in developing wetlands programs sensitive aquatic habitat and assists other EPA programs and states in developing wetland programs. Specifically, the team:

- Develops and implements both regulatory and non-regulatory means for aquatic ecosystem protection, including advanced identification programs pursuant to Section 230.80 of EPA's CWA '404 (b)1 Guidelines.
- Develops and implements watershed projects focused on the protection of wetlands. Provides training and assistance regarding identification of wetlands, qualities and functions of wetlands, and regulatory programs regarding wetlands to a variety of audiences, including federal, State and local agencies.
- Develops and implements strategies which provide additional research and insight into wetlands values and functions within a landscape.
- Develops and conducts outreach efforts which educate and inform both technical and public audiences on wetlands.
- Reviews, evaluates and makes recommendations on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' proposed navigable permits and projects and U.S. Coast Guard navigable permits.
- Reviews and evaluates environmental impacts and advises Corps District Offices on use of sites for disposal of dredge spoil or fill material proposed in CWA '404 permit applications.
- Provides information and assistance to the States concerning the procedures and requirements for the assumption of applicable provisions of the '404 program.
- Assists other EPA programs in areas of Wetland Review staff's expertise.
- Manages EPA enforcement relative to the unpermitted discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States.
- Evaluates and comments on 404 and Ocean Dumping regulations, guidance, proposed legislation, etc.

b. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Team. The NEPA Team, under the direction of the team leader, carries out the Region's responsibilities under NEPA and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. The team reviews detailed draft and final Environmental Assessments (EA) and Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) prepared by other Federal agencies. These reviews may require coordination with other program offices and technical staff within the Region. The team assists other federal agencies in developing conceptual frameworks to include environmental considerations into their decision making processes. It provides program guidance and advice to other federal agencies in the need for EIS's and their subsequent content. It assists Headquarters in preparing Agency comments on environmental regulations or Agency actions which transcend Regional boundaries. It prepares draft and final EA's, EIS's and special studies as mandated by Section 102(2) (c) of NEPA and files them with EPA's Office of Federal Activities. It distributes draft and final EIS's for Region III sponsored projects to federal, state, local, and private interests for review and comment. It manages the public participation process under NEPA for Region III EA's and EIS's. It coordinates and consolidates the necessary Regional technical support into the EIS process. It reviews selected PL 92-500 grant applications, New Source NPDES applications referred by the Water Protection Division, and Superfund remedial actions for controversy and adequacy. Based on these reviews, it makes recommendations concerning processing the application for federal participation; returning the applicant's EA for additional information; and the need to prepare an EIS. It prepares and distributes Records of Decision on documents prepared by the Region pursuant to NEPA.

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION. The Office of Environmental Innovation (OEI), under the supervision of the Associate Division Director, promotes the development and support of creative and innovative approaches and solutions to environmental problems that traditional regulatory programs have been unable to address. OEI guides efforts to generate and manage innovative changes and make them part of regular operations. The office identifies and explores emerging environmental issues, evaluates promising new approaches to environmental protection, and nurtures change to create a new dimension of performance and skills. It is an advocate for the concept of the Learning Organization, where a successful organization must continually adapt and learn in order to respond to changes in the environment.

OEI is the main point of contact for the Region with Headquarters' Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation (OPEI). OEI coordinates innovation policy, markets Regional efforts, and *serves as Region III lead for facilitation of the Division Sustainability contacts workgroups.*

Serves as brokers – engaging others to act on decisions and innovative approaches; coaches – to support managers and program staff on matter related to adoption and implementation of innovative approaches; coordinators – to track, monitor, report, and communicate on regional and national innovation work, and facilitate linkages between programs and Divisions; and implementers – to incorporate project management responsibility into personal work plans and performance agreements, and conducting project management planning and oversight activities. OEI serves as the Regional Focal Point for Children's Health Protection and is also responsible for the Green Buildings Program.

OFFICE OF MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT. The Office of Monitoring and Assessment (OMA), under the direction of the Associate Division Director located in Philadelphia, is responsible for a variety of environmental monitoring and assessment activities conducted by staff who are based in Philadelphia and Wheeling, West Virginia.

a: Freshwater Biology Team. The Freshwater Biology Team, under the direction of the team leader, is located in Wheeling, WV. It provides technical, field and laboratory services in the areas of bioassessment and biocriteria to EPA programs, other federal agencies, state programs, interstate task forces and compacts, and citizens' groups. Conducts scientific investigations, assessments, surveys and consultative reviews of the effects of waterborne contaminants on aquatic biological resources. Provides consultations and technical assistance on aquatic biology activities and investigations relative to environmental control programs. The team provides technical expertise and training in bioassessment evaluations of freshwater invertebrates including sample collection methods, taxonomy, data interpretation, and quality control. The team also provides freshwater acute and chronic toxicity testing in the laboratory to evaluate compliance with effluent limits or screen for toxic discharges.

b: Coastal and Ecosystems Team. The Coastal and Ecosystems Team, under the direction of the team leader, performs a variety of programs in support of the Coastal, Oceans, and Wetlands programs. Coastal and Oceans Monitoring functions are: conducts ocean and coastal monitoring programs and aerial surveillance for identification and collection of data for status and trends and for decision making and program management; performs data assessments to provide appropriate technical input for Ocean Disposal, Ocean Discharge program decisions, for National Marine Debris program assessments, Coastal and Ocean Programs, the Marine Protection and Sanctuaries Act and port dredging activities; and performs dive operations, through the Scientific Dive Unit in support of coastal and oceans monitoring programs; and in support of other Regional programs requiring underwater evaluation and assessment operations. Wetlands support functions are: develops initiatives and strategies for enhancing and protecting aquatic and terrestrial resources (indicator development, wetland standards, development of landscape tools and GIS systems, restoration targeting, mitigation banking, cumulative impact assessment, etc.); develops agency positions on new regulations and policies (Nationwide Permits, Statewide Programmatic General Permits, Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act stream buffer rules, etc.); administers wetland grants; develops and implements internal tracking systems (budgets, accomplishments, etc.); and provides internal coordination across programs (Wetlands and NEPA teams in EAID, Water Protection Division CWA §305b/303d programs, and the Chesapeake Bay Program Office).